

## Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

MCCRANIE, JAMES R. 1976. *Crotalus polystictus*.

*Crotalus polystictus* (Cope)  
Mexican lance-headed rattlesnake

*Crotalus lugubris* Jan, 1859:153, 156 (part). See remarks.

*Crotalus lugubris* var. *multimaculata* Jan, 1863:124. Type-locality, "Mexico." Restricted to Túpátaro, Guanajuato, Mexico by Smith and Taylor (1950:330). Type specimen, Westphal-Castelnau collection, present disposition unknown. See REMARKS.

*Caudisoma polysticta* Cope, 1865:191. Type-locality, "Table land, Mexico." Restricted to Túpátaro, Guanajuato by Smith and Taylor (1950:330). No holotype designated or known to exist.

*Crotalus polystictus*: Cope, in Yarrow, 1875:533.

*Crotalus jimenezii* Dugès, 1877:23. Type-locality not definitely stated. Restricted to Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico by Smith and Taylor (1950:334). No type-specimen designated, but U. S. Natl. Mus. 46508, juv., Guanajuato, Mexico, collected by A. Dugès, date unknown, is labeled "Duplicate Type" *fide* Smith and Necker (1944:187) and Cochran (1961:170) (not examined by author).

• CONTENT. The species is monotypic.

• DIAGNOSIS. A species of *Crotalus* distinguished from all other species of the genus by the following characteristics: slender head and rounded snout; a pair of elongated posterior intercanthals; either a canthal, an internasal, or an extra scale virtually becomes a supranasal by separating the regular nasals just above the nostril.

• DEFINITION. *Crotalus polystictus* is a medium-sized rattlesnake ranging in size from about 230 mm at birth (Klauber, 1952) to approximately 985 mm (largest measured specimen; Gloyd, 1940). Scutellation is as follows: 25–28 (mode, 27) dorsal scale rows at mid-body, all keeled except for the lowest two on each side; 161–177 ventrals in males, 167–187 in females; 24–29 subcaudals in males, 17–25 in females; supralabials 12–15; infralabials 11–16; preoculars 2; postoculars 3–5; loreals 2; prefoveals 1–3. The anterior subocular contacts the fourth and fifth supralabial. A thin light supraocular transverse mark edged with black or dark brown is present, and curves slightly backward. The dorsal pattern usually consists of two rows of 30–47 black-edged, dark brown elliptical blotches. These blotches may be oval rather than elliptical and also may tend to merge with one another medially. Laterally there are several additional lines of auxiliary blotches which are longitudinally shorter than the main series. The ground color varies from gray to dark yellow. The rattle is relatively small. The fangs are unusually long in relationship to the body length (Klauber, 1939). The osteology is unknown except that one specimen has 8 dentary, 7 pterygoid and no palatine teeth (Brattstrom, 1964).

• DESCRIPTIONS. Cope (1865) originally described *Crotalus polystictus*. Gloyd (1940) and Klauber (1952) provided data on variation in scutellation and analysis of color pattern. Klauber (1936, 1972) also included tables on variation in scutellation.

• ILLUSTRATIONS. Klauber (1972) provided a black and white photograph. Cope (1900) provided four line drawings of the head scutellation, one of the tail scutellation, and one of the scutellation of a lateral portion of the body. Klauber (1936, 1972) illustrated the dorsal pattern and (1972) included a drawing showing scutellation and the pattern of the top of the head. Gloyd (1940) gave three drawings of the head and a drawing of the mid-body illustrating the scutellation and pattern. Jan and Sordelli (1874) figured the Westphal-Castelnau type-specimen of *C. lugubris* var. *multimaculata*.

• DISTRIBUTION. *Crotalus polystictus* is found in the highlands (1450–2600m) of central Mexico from southern Zacatecas south to central Michoacán and south central Jalisco and eastward to east central Veracruz, including Aguascalientes, Guanajuato, Distrito Federal, México (state), Morelos, and Puebla. It should also occur in suitable habitat in the intervening states of Querétaro, Hidalgo, and Tlaxcala. It probably also occurs in extreme northern Colima as an old literature

record of "Colima" suggests. The southern Jalisco records are only approximately 25 miles north of the Colima state line. Future collecting in the environs of Volcán de Colima, in Colima, should reveal the presence of *C. polystictus* in that state. A specimen in the Paris Museum is recorded from Tehuantepec, Oaxaca, but Tehuantepec probably represents the shipping point rather than the locality at which the specimen was actually collected (Klauber, 1952). Specimens have been collected in open grass-covered rolling plains in southern Zacatecas (Klauber, 1972) and in similar circumstances in southern Jalisco (pers. observ.). Formerly *polystictus* was abundant in the marshes around Lago de Chapala but the draining of these marshes probably resulted in reducing their numbers (Duellman, 1961).

• FOSSIL RECORD. None.

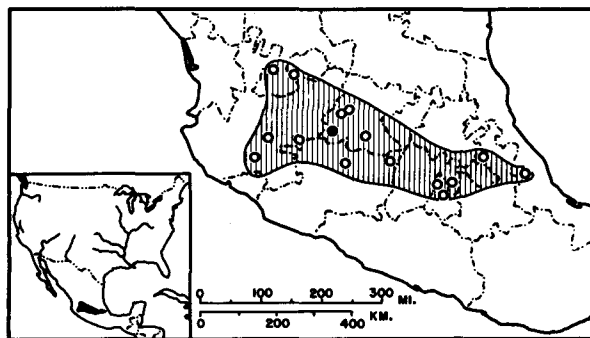
• PERTINENT LITERATURE. Gloyd (1940) and Klauber (1952) published the most comprehensive systematic accounts, including distribution maps. Distribution maps were also published by Klauber (1936, 1972). Smith (1943) includes scale counts and locality records. Duellman (1961) cites locality records and a brief habitat note and (1965) includes the species in biogeographic discussion. The species appears in keys in the following: Klauber (1936, 1952, 1971, 1972), Gloyd (1940), and Smith and Taylor (1945). Smith and Pérez Higareda (1965) recorded *C. polystictus* from Tapalpa, Jalisco and discussed the old literature records of "Guadalajara" and "Colima."

• REMARKS. *Crotalus lugubris* var. *multimaculata* Jan is the same snake now known as *C. polystictus* (Cope). Although *multimaculata* antedates *polystictus*, the name *multimaculata* Jan was suppressed (International Commission . . . , 1955). See Klauber (1940, 1952) for the nomenclatural history of *C. lugubris* var. *multimaculata* Jan.

• ETYMOLOGY. The name *polystictus* is derived from a combination of the Greek words *polys*, meaning many, and *stiktos*, meaning spotted or dappled in reference to the several longitudinal rows of spots on the dorsum.

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MAP. The solid circle marks the type locality; open circles indicate other records.

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